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Editors: EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
PHILIP BURNHAM
HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor;* C. G. PAULDING, *Literary Editor;* JOHN C. CORT, *Associate Editor;* JOHN BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager.*

Spain Once More

THE IDEA that Spain is a threat to peace of course is absurd. Before the war Spain needed French help in order to even stay in Africa; during the war in spite of Spain's strategical position Hitler and Mussolini decided that Franco could not profitably be used. Now that the war is finished Franco is powerless.

The Polish delegate who brought the Spanish peril before the Security Council of UN did so only because that is the technical way to get the Security Council to investigate the internal affairs of a sovereign nation. It was slightly embarrassing to have a representative of the Polish régime worrying about the absence of Spanish democracy because there are so many people who are worrying about whether or not there is a democracy in Poland and because there are so few people who have the faintest chance of finding out anything at all about what is happening in Poland since no one is allowed to go there. But it does not really matter that it was Poland rather than Russia or France that opened the debate nor on what pretext. We have to look at Spain.

We have to look at Poland. Because there is suffering and injustice in Spain; because there is suffering and there may be injustice in Poland. We know about the suffering. You do not have to investigate any country in Europe to know that it has its share or more than its share of misery. But you do have to investigate to find out whether that misery is increased by a political system which multiplies it by oppression and injustice. You have to investigate to find out whether fear is added to hunger. Because eventually there may be a harvest and bread—that might depend on the seasons—but fear in the prisons, in the concentration camps, among the displaced persons and the deportees depends on something else.

In Spain fear springs from a régime which is a civil disorder, a disease. In Poland we do not know if there is fear or injustice or enthusiasm. We are not allowed to know. But we must know, we must look, we must be permitted to look.

That is why we do not care who it may be who seeks to make it possible for us to look into Spain, into Poland—into Spain in order that through this precedent we may look into Poland. Or into Yugoslavia, or into Greece, or into any nation anywhere at any time whenever we are worried about what is going on. It is entirely agreeable to us that it should have been an Australian who has found a formula that will permit us to look into Spain.

But once we have looked—once we have looked even into ourselves (the delegate desires an investigation of race relations in Arkansas) what happens then?

Intervention, blockade, an atom bomb? The occupation of the country of the unjust by the armed forces of the countries of the just—naturally and always the same—with Britain, France, Russia and America bringing four brands of democracy into four zones if there is enough room for four zones? That is a cumbersome operation; it does not always seem to work when you try it. In the future it does not seem as if you could threaten seriously to try it. Because it is not everywhere that there is room enough for all four of the just nations to instruct the natives in democracy. In Poland for instance there is room for only one of them.

So that after you have induced the Security Council to find out where the smell comes from there still remains to be sought and discovered a new technique of intervention. A technique that will work for peace and not for war. It is not by looking at Spain, or Argentina, or Poland or by worrying about how bad are the Swiss who have banks which actually suppose they are bound to hold on to the moneys entrusted to them no matter who wins a war, that this technique will be found. It will be found only if Russians, British and Americans evolve it from their own action in justice.

Eighteen Basic Freedoms

THE PAN AMERICAN UNION has now published a draft declaration on "The Interna-

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tional Rights and Duties of Man" which may have historic consequences. It is the work of the Inter-American Juridical Committee which was entrusted with this formulation at Mexico City a year ago. The intention is to have it adopted with accepted modifications at least throughout the Americas.

It has, of course, a number of historical precedents. The four cited in the draft declaration itself are the Institut de Droit International (1929), the American Law Institute (1943), the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace (1943 and 1944) and the International Labor Organization (meeting in general session in Philadelphia just two years ago). Popular sentiment for an international bill of rights developed considerably during the struggle against the Axis totalitarians. Yet it would seem that the realization of basic political, economic and social rights for every man in every nation would be the culmination of full-fledged international cooperation rather than a starting point to be established by mere fiat.

The rights and duties envisioned in the proposed draft are in large measure embodied in the laws and practices of a number of individual states—particularly those regarded as political democracies. The Constitution of the Soviet Union itself does acknowledge many of these fundamental human rights. It is the gulf between popular sentiment and actual practice that would make it impractical for a mere gesture by, say, the Assembly of the United Nations to bring human freedom into being everywhere.

Within the American system something tangible might well be arrived at. Here in the United States there are poll taxes, discriminations in employment, sectors of industry where life and limb are not adequately protected, here and there monopolistic barriers to press freedom, large classes of people beyond the pale of social security etc., etc. In the other and more poverty-ridden American nations there are vast numbers of people who are still deprived of the basic opportunities for a healthful and secure existence. There are millions of victims of inefficiency and neglect. But throughout the hemisphere generally there is no centralized repression, no directed tyranny against the fundamental rights of the human person. There are immigration quotas, fixed elections, industrial exploitation and again, terrible neglect, but there is no totalitarianism on the European model.

Therefore in this vast region, where the democratic sentiment, at least, is universal, it is most fitting that a real start be made in the gradual building up of international observance of the inviolability of human rights and of the family. As suggested by the Juridical Committee, the problem of enforcement in cases of flagrant violation on a major scale would be left to the common consultation of the signatory states. But all along an Inter-American body with advisory functions would be working to bring this happy condition into being in each individual nation. If a pretty good approximation of basic human rights is assured throughout the Americas, nations from outside the hemisphere living up to the same principles could become affiliated in somewhat the same manner as contemplated by some of the advocates of Union Now. Hemisphere action of this sort could serve as a model; it would give an international bill of rights a real start.

The draft published by the Pan American Union includes the right to life from the very moment of conception and the right to life of incurables and the insane. Personal liberty gives first place to the family and involves freedom of movement and of residence within the limits of public order and national security. Freedom of speech and expression includes access to the sources of information, domestic and foreign. Freedom of worship is construed in the broadest sense, extending to "religious propaganda," assuring parents the right to instruct their children in accordance with their own religious beliefs and assuring both public and private worship. Regulations of an economic and financial character in line with general national legislation are not considered as barriers to freedom of worship.

In safeguarding the basic right of owning property this draft calls upon the state to see to it that the essential material needs of a decent human existence are provided for. There is strong emphasis on doing away with racial and religious discrimination in such matters as the right to an education and political rights. No candidate is to be barred from office for such reasons and only restrictions genuinely based on the individual citizen's competence to vote intelligently would be permitted. Naturally freedom from arbitrary arrest and the right to a fair trial are two of the eighteen basic rights defined here.

Perhaps the hour has come for the United States to take the political offensive. A showdown on an international bill of rights in the UN may not be a feasible step at present. We have even to be careful that we do not seem to be dragooning the other states in this hemisphere into signing such an agreement. The main thing is to take the initiative and consistently to utilize every opportunity for international action furthering the protection of human rights.

Public Schools and Secularism

THE SERIES of articles, "Can Protestantism Win America?" which the editor, Charles Clayton Morrison, is publishing currently in *The Christian Century*, accumulates interest as each part appears.

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At this writing, Dr. Morrison has not yet dealt head on with the Catholic Church and we look forward with special anticipation to that part, but already he has treated numerous ideas and problems to note.

Protestantism is less powerful now in the United States than it was, Dr. Morrison believes. "The explanation may lie either in the inner weakening of Protestantism or in the emergence of external forces which either are hostile to it or, if not positively hostile, have drained off popular interest in religion into other fields. It may lie, as I think it does, in both. . . .

> What are these magnitudes which have arisen over against Protestantism? One is, of course, the Roman Catholic Church. . . . The other magnitude is secularism. . . . Secularism has been growing much faster in American culture than Protestantism. There are many factors which explain this growth. I have chosen three which I consider the most obvious ones. . . . They are (1) our secularized system of education, (2) our preoccupation with science and (3) our organized and commercialized entertainment.

Certainly Catholics share with *The Christian Century* concern over the morbid growth of secularism and welcome the analysis given in these articles and cheer the resolve to react more than sadly and passively. Perhaps Catholics (with those parochial schools) would not give the public school system quite the emphasis which Dr. Morrison does, and at least right here and now, THE COMMONWEAL has a somewhat jaded feeling that school education has tended to be overemphasized in America.

Charles Clayton Morrison directs a remarkably vigorous *j'accuse* against the American public school system (which, by the way, the French, debating their newly proposed constitution, would do well to study):

> Our educational system has been the most powerful influence in determining the mind-set of generation after generation of our youth. With respect to religion, this influence has been exercised under a theory of neutrality which has excluded all instruction in religion from general education. . . . However, this neutrality is not merely neutral. It is positive. It takes the form of secularism which, when not overtly hostile to religion, is ignorant of it and indifferent to it. . . .

Dr. Morrison finds the schools reflecting all that the community holds significant, with a curriculum which is "in theory, a replica in miniature of the common life"—except that "for religion, however, the school has a blind spot."

He describes the situation practically:

> The school has the child five days in the week, with homework added. It deals with him on a basis of strict discipline and confronts him with a system characterized by traditional prestige, professional skill and scientific method. In its curriculum he comes into contact with every major issue—save one. That is religion. The inevitable effect is to create a negative prejudice against religion. . . .
>
> As far as I can see, there are only two ways out. One is for the public school to open its curriculum to the teaching of religion. The other is for Protestantism to establish its own schools, somewhat on the model of the Roman Catholic parochial schools, and to withdraw its children from the public schools. . . .

While feeling toward the regular, present public school very much as most Catholics do, and contemplating parochial schools as a reasonable institution, Dr. Morrison differs by going out for religious instruction in public schools rather than for Protestant parochial schools.

This choice is justified by a description of "teaching religion" which appears to us overdelicate:

> I do not advocate worship exercises with devotional Bible reading and prayer in the public school. . . . The imparting of knowedge about religion as a phenomenon of our culture is not to be equated with the inculcation of religious devotion. . . . It may be said that this kind of instruction in religion would still be secular—its end would be knowledge about religion, not religious devotion. This is partly true. . . .

While the arguments and explanations included in the Morrison articles persuade us that the above is, perhaps, partly not true, we believe that it is, unfortunately, preponderantly true. We do not believe that religion could be successfully taught in public schools in some new "positive" manner at the same time "neutral" in a new and meaningful way.

Our own experience as well as our teaching has been summed up by authorities in the past, and suggesting a few is not only appealing to authority, but also to experience. "Those who are not with me are against me," for example. "I believe, in order to know. . . ." "What is Truth?"

There is no easy road away from the terribly embracing secularism of these years, and the public school problem is not easily solved for Christians. Separate "parochial" schools for Catholics and for Protestants and for Secularists is not a happy solution. Indeed, we don't believe that Catholics consider sufficiently how unhappy that solution most likely is. But it is a better way, we are convinced, than the theoretic road which Dr. Morrison projects, and its less welcome features could be minimized. More detail planning, construction and then traffic we are convinced would prove his roadway is something that would sink down again quickly in the same morass of positive secularism which grips the schools now. The democracy of other countries, such as Holland and England and Denmark, and an earlier America, have to a greater degree recognized that the schools' authority stands in the place of the parents', and have provided that school money could go to institutions freely chosen by families, which they thus support through their tax contributions, according to the lights of their tradition and conscience and intelligence.

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Guaranteed Wages

The neglected small dents that so mar our economy

Harry Lorin Binsse

THIRTY-FIVE years ago in a memorandum addressed to Mr. Lincoln Filene, Louis D. Brandeis wrote, "Irregularity of employment is to my mind the greatest of industrial wastes, and one of the main causes of social demoralization. . . . In my opinion this irregularity can be overcome in large measure, but it will often involve a reorganization of the methods and scope of all business in a particular trade as well as a reorganization of the business of individual concerns." What Mr. Brandeis then said remains, in both particulars, true today. Irregularity of employment continues full-force; even the all-out war effort only reduced, did not eliminate, it. We may expect it as a major characteristic of the peacetime economy into which we are now moving. And it is still true that this irregularity can be overcome in large measure if, to quote Philip Murray, it is given "the best cooperative effort of all groups of citizens." Bishop Sheil puts it very succinctly: "I believe that the guaranteed annual wage for the working man is just; it is socially necessary; it is economically feasible; it is a democratic imperative."

We are all thoroughly aware of the phenomenon of cyclical depressions—all too painfully and personally aware if we are more than twenty-five years old. To this question libraries of books have been dedicated and endless solutions proposed. That we shall long continue to try remedies for the major depression is both desirable and inevitable. But in addition to being cyclical, our economy, as has just been pointed out, is seasonal or periodic, and periodic specifically with regard to employment. I do not mean to suggest that this seasonal characteristic applies only to the worker. Obviously the shopkeeper, the automobile manufacturer, the farmer know it as a regular part of their lives. But the point is that they have largely mastered it—in many cases by the simple expedient of passing its burden on to their employees. With reasonable accuracy they can forecast it and provide against it. For the ordinary worker this is next to impossible. The things which produce "Closed this week" signs on his factory are beyong his computation, and it is beyond his computation to know how often or how long that sign will hang in any given year. The results, as Mr. Brandeis said, are deeply demoralizing. Yet the extraordinary thing about this aspect of our economy—which we have constantly with us, not as intervals of five or ten years—is that we know so little about it. It is literally true that no department or agency in the Federal Government is at present able to give any accurate picture of just how seasonal American employment is or has been at any given time in the past, or in any given industry. Some long and notoriously seasonal occupations, especially the building trades, can have figures assigned them by the unions involved, but these unions are not always eager to make their statistics available, except when they help as an argument for higher hourly wage rates. In most industries, even those well known to be seasonal, the labor unions concerned do not know at all accurately how many days out of a given year their members are seasonally laid off. Thus the CIO in an official pamphlet, "Guaranteed Wages the Year Round," says vaguely: "In steel, wage-earners [before the war] often had only 3 days' work a week. In autos many men had a chance to work only 6 or 8 months a year.

At the present moment the Bureau of the Census, in order to supply a groundwork for the Sub-Committee on Guaranteed Wage Plans of which Murray Latimer is at present chairman, is undertaking to get some accurate and definite information on this matter in a few specimen cases in certain selected industries. When the results of this survey are made public, probably some time toward the end of this year, we shall for the first time be able to measure the seasonal ups and downs of our employment in statistical terms. The Social Security Board, however, has annually published tables which give a vague indication of what goes on. These are the tables which show, on a sampling basis, the number of persons working during one, two, three or four quarters of the year, and the amounts each group earned. These tables do no more than supply hints from which we may guess at the facts. Thus if a person eligible under the Social Security Act (which excludes agricultural workers, domestic servants, the self-employed and some others) works for one week in a quarter, he has worked in that quarter. Consequently it is conceivable that a man who has worked only four weeks in a

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given year will appear in the category of those working four quarters, while one who has worked 13 weeks will be listed as having worked only in one quarter. But if one correlates total annual earnings with the number of quarters worked, the picture is a little clearer. Though not much clearer, for how many of those classified worked part time?

In any case, the Social Security figures for the end of the thirties lead me to guess that in those years over half of our regularly employed labor force suffered from seasonal layoffs and had no other employment to make up for these layoffs. What is more remarkable, the figures for 1943, when we supposedly had "full employment," lead me to suspect that during that year nearly a quarter of the regularly employed had less than 52 weeks' employment—many must have had considerably less. Thus we find that 11 percent of 4-quarter workers made less than $800 in that year, 14 percent more made less than $1,200. When we bear in mind the conditions prevalent during that year, with much overtime and hourly rates generally high, the significance of these figures becomes apparent.

Not long ago the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers AFL supplied some interesting figures, which it labeled "Estimated Annual Income of Construction Electrical Workers, 1931-1943." Remember that this table assumes an average hourly rate of about $1.45.

Year	*Average Annual Income*
1931	$1,007
1932	634
1933	541
1934	696
1935	989
1936	1,570
1937	1,846
1938	1,537
1939	1.650
1940	1,900
1941	2,623
1942	3,280
1943	3,071

Notice that this means that during the peace years, at the worst, the electrician had about ten weeks' employment out of 52, at the best, about 35. Admittedly the building trades are notoriously seasonal (though they need not be, as has been amply demonstrated in construction for war purposes).

It has been remarked that only two occupations are largely proof both against cyclical and seasonal fluctuations—the baking of bread and the building of coffins. Some industries are remarkably little affected by depressions: clothing, food processing and tobacco are three specimens. Some are terribly hit by depressions but very little by seasons: machinery and tools occur to mind. Some are made seasonal by factors beyond our control: fruit and vegetable canning, for example. But of all the industries which now are in fact seasonal, how many really have to be so?

Almost everyone has heard of the Hormel plan to spread workers' incomes over the year in an essentially seasonal line, meat packing and processing. This plan was described in THE COMMONWEAL for September 16, 1938. It is complicated in detail, but it boils down to an attempt to give every regular worker a regular weekly pay check based on dividing by fifty-two the total which would be paid him on an equitable basis for his total annual effort. Some weeks he may not work at all; other weeks he may put in many hours of overtime. But he is sure of a given amount per week, and bonuses if production exceeds estimates. The CIO summarizes what happened.

Before	*After*
POPULATION (of Austin, Minnesota, where Hormel has its plant): 1934—13,000.	1940—20,000.
PAY: 1934—average weekly earnings for Hormel employees, $21.	1944—$50.
JOBS: 1929—3,336 workers, averaging 25 hours per week.	1944—3,913 workers, averaging 50 percent more hours per week than in 1929.
HOUSING: Sections of the population lived in a shantytown.	A city of homes. Three times as many houses built in Austin as in other Minnesota towns of comparable size, between 1934-40.
BUSINESS: Sharp rise and fall in sales. Uncertain credit.	Retail sales up 42 percent, wholesale sales up 70 per cent, service receipts up 30 percent since 1935. Employment in trade and services rose more than 20 percent by 1940.

Another, far less widely known scheme for accomplishing the same happy results is that of the Nunn-Bush Shoe Company. It operates on the basis that a given percentage of the wholesale value of Nunn-Bush shoes produced shall constitute the reward for the laborers making those shoes. They are then given "drawing accounts" and under an elaborate system receive weekly "at least 1/52 of the member's yearly differential rate." The majority of workers are viewed as permanent employees and may not be laid off. We are told that, "according to the company, the main advantage of the plan is that it provides employees with regular pay and a guarantee against lay-off, but permits the adjustment of wages to changes in the price of the product." Both the Nunn-Bush and the Hormel plans are, strictly speaking, *annual wage* plans.

The third of the large firms which has successfully carried over a period of years a plan to reduce lay-offs and seasonality in employment is likewise the largest—Proctor and Gamble. Here we have what is better described as "guaranteed

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employment," since the company reserves the right to shift a worker from a job at one rate of pay to a job at another; what is guaranteed (at present to approximately 70 percent of all those employed) is 48 weeks' employment at full time pay, including a week's vacation with pay. Mr. Richard R. Deupree, the president of this company, has been an enthusiastic advocate of what Proctor and Gamble has been doing in assuring its workers job permanency. In the *Nation's Business* for March he writes with great enthusiasm about it, and his recent address before the American Management Association tells of countless and totally unexpected ways in which his firm benefitted by taking the trouble to work its plan out. One of the most interesting of these relates to cotton-seed oil extraction, a process which nature has done all it can to make seasonal. P&G extraction plants which have gone on an annual basis produce not only cheaper but better oil than the commonplace seasonal plants operating only two months out of the twelve. And another interesting outcome is the "rationing" process whereby P&G retail outlets are shipped a steady stream of soaps and shortenings instead of one or two big shipments a year—with resultant economies in the purchase of packaging materials, boxes, etc., and with the happy result of evening out employment in the plants of firms from which P&G itself purchases on an annual rather than a lump basis.

Many other American businesses have tried to do something to reduce or eliminate seasonality in employment, some of them with success comparoble to the three I have briefly described. But most of those who have genuinely accomplished anything in this direction are small enterprises; the larger companies have generally instituted only palliatives, perhaps because the complexity of their operations allowed them to do no more, perhaps because they were unwilling to make the genuine effort required to work out viable methods. Some of our leading financial and business leaders are convinced that in a general application of the annual (or guaranteed) wage lies the solution not only of our spotty employment problem—and hence spotty production picture, as contrasted with the steady and therefore maximal production possible under dictatorship—but even, perhaps, of the problem of the cyclical depression, in causing which over-production and under-consumption play so large a part. If we can, by evening out employment, make demand more steady and, hence, production more keyed to demand, may we not greatly decelerate the business cycle, perhaps even to the point of making it relatively painless?

The fact that firms like General Motors, General Electric, men like Eric Johnston, Samuel S. Fels, Wendell Willkie have taken this whole business seriously indeed should be sufficient indication of its importance. Yet the fact also remains that as of January, 1945, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in an investigation of the extent of Employment and Annual-Wage Guaranty provisions in Union Agreements, found only 42,500 workers (out of the 8,000,000 under examination) covered by such agreements, and of these only 12,500 were in manufacturing industries. Not much of an achievement since Mr. Brandeis wrote his memorandum for Mr. Filene.

★

This small achievement is undoubtedly the reason why a lot of people in Washington believe that any broad extension of annual wage or guaranteed wage plans will take place only through governmental intervention at one level or another. Thus we find the CIO asking "Will Government Help Be Needed?" and answering, "How much help the government will have to give depends on how much business can do itself. That is largely up to business. The CIO stands ready to cooperate with it in planning steady jobs. But what business cannot do by itself or with labor's aid, the people, through our government, must provide." Nothing specific, apart from the measures generally backed by President Truman in his message to Congress last fall. But behind this vague language lies the thinking widely to be encountered in government and labor circles today: we shall never get steady employment without some system of governmental insurance and compulsion explicitly directed at this problem.

It is true that so far our experience has been disheartening. Two major pieces of New Deal legislation contained provisions specifically intended to encourage such plans as Hormel or Nunn-Bush or Proctor and Gamble have put into effect. One is the Social Security Act, which permits state unemployment laws to grant a lower rate to employers who maintain a guaranteed employment account under which all employees are guaranteed 30 hours of wages for each of 40 weeks in 12 months, with one weekly hour deducted for each added week guaranteed. The second is the Fair Labor Standards Act, which exempts employers who have signed a union agreement guaranteeing employment on an annual basis from the payment of time and a half for overtime up to 12 hours a day and fifty-six hours a week, provided, however, that the employees do not work more than 2,080 hours a year. In fairness it must be added, however, that the latter Act rules out certain very practical types of plan by requiring the current payment of all wages, as do certain state laws. In other words an employer cannot legally withhold money earned in one week (when work was heavy) and use it to equalize the pay envelope's contents in a week when work was light.

In 1944 the United Steelworkers petitioned the

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War Labor Board, requesting that the United States Steel Corporation "et al" assure a guaranteed minimum of 40 hours' pay for each week during the life of the contract then in force. Hearings were held and the Board denied the union's request on the ground that in the form presented, it would subject industry to unwarranted financial risks. Such risks "could be reduced by modifications and safeguards worked out through collective bargaining, but, in the present state of the country's information on the subject, the Board is not prepared in this case or in other dispute cases to impose such guarantees by order." A separate report was made by the Board to the President recommending the appointment of an independent commission to study and recommend. In his letter to the President, Mr. Davis, the chairman of the Board, said: "A guaranteed annual wage is one of the main aspirations of American workers. The search for it is a part of the search for continuity of employment, which is perhaps the most vital economic and social objective of our times." The President therefore passed this task over to the Advisory Board of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconstruction, and Mr. Latimer's committee, to which I have earlier referred, is now preparing to get on the job.

What recommendation will emerge we cannot tell. But it is my conviction that the most desirable policy will be to extend greatly the kind of encouragement for such schemes already contained in the Social Security Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act, including the modification of the latter in order to permit wage withholding under certain circumstances and with certain safeguards. Here, it seems to me, is a fine field for incentive taxation, quite justified as a reward to the employer for the effort required to work out a practical annual or guaranteed wage plan for his business. Much as I hate to admit it, I must agree with Senator Taft. No democratic government can guarantee full time employment at standard wages. But it can do more than we have yet done to promote that desirable end. If ever there were a case where enlightened self-interest could operate to the benefit at once of the business and of the labor communities, here it is. And however small the achievement to date, it has at least served the purpose of showing that Mr. Brandeis was right. "Irregularity of employment . . . can be overcome in large measure . . . a reorganization of the methods and scope of all business . . ." Reorganization is work; the workman is worthy of his hire. It is this hire that the government can help provide.

A Home in Washington

How I plan to solve my own housing problem

Walter J. Marx

THAT AMERICA faces the most serious housing problem in its history is a fact that requires no particular documentation. The press has been full of articles dealing with one aspect or another of this problem. Probably the most comprehensive treatment of the subject appeared in the *Survey Graphic* early in the year. Mr. Binsse of THE COMMONWEAL long ago pointed out some of the causes of our present dilemma. Congress is being urged to act but so far has done little to insure the production of homes for America's millions now living with relatives, in rooming houses, trailers, or hotels. Most authorities believe that it will be five or ten years before we can build enough houses to meet the present shortage. No one dare estimate the time it will take to rebuild the American slums. This housing problem is of national magnitude, strikes at the very heart of the national welfare, and if no solution is found in the near future, will drag in its wake a series of social repercussions which are frightening to contemplate. We are agreed, then, that national legislation is essential. The problem has gone too far for local solution.

But Congress can only make laws; it cannot build houses. It can create conditions that will encourage the building of houses but there will be inevitably a long lag before we can occupy these houses. I, and several million other veterans want homes *now*. The thought of doubling up with relatives or living in rented rooms with no facilities for as long as five years or more until the slow wheels of bureaucracy and a sick building industry have provided homes for us is intolerable. And then there is the awful thought: what if we shall be unable to afford the homes after they are built? This is not fanciful. Most of us are in the class which cannot afford homes costing more than $5,000. Yet in all the areas of large population concentration in the United States the

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builders are telling us that they cannot put up livable homes for that price. Even the manufacturers of the much-touted prefabricated dream houses announce selling prices ranging from $5,000 on up. The failure of Mr. Wyatt to obtain a ceiling price under $10,000 is indication of the prices at which most of the new houses will be sold.

Even if by some wave of the magic wand or by an act of Congress, one could return to the $5,000 home of pre-war vintage, such a home would offer no solution for many of us. Like the city apartment house, it was a home designed for the one-child or childless family. Many of us already have more than one child and expect more. Shall we ever be able to find a home for our families or must we reside on the margin of the rich American economy, carrying the crowded conditions of the slum with us wherever we go?

For some of us, faced with an insoluble dilemma, and desperate for homes for our families, personal action is necessary, no matter the cost in effort or sacrifice, and I believe that something can be done. This then is the solution to the housing problem, not for the great mass of homeless Americans, but for that minority which is willing to pay the price in sweat and discomfort. It is an individual's attempt to solve a personal problem. The solution is not fanciful; it has been tried by many others with success. It requires no act of Congress, no waiting for the building industry to get into production. It requires no grants in aid from the State and very little capital. The best way of explaining the plan is to outline my personal application of it.

The end of the war found me with a wife and three very small children. It is our intention to have my wife's mother and grandmother live with us. We have no home. During the war we have traveled from place to place, living in hotels, one-room basement apartments, and more recently, a two-room apartment in the Ohio flood region. Last year we had six feet of water in our apartment and camped out upstairs over the flood waters for three weeks without heat or gas—babies, dog, and all—using a canoe for transportation. We intend to live in or around Washington, D. C. Does any reader know of a landlord who would welcome the Marx family? I should mention that there is also an indomitable Sealyham, Siegfried, rather noisy for an apartment house. Certainly my friends in Washington consider our case hopeless. In the age of progress we are an anachronism. A few landlords will allow a dog, but children, never! Even if we did find a place, we could not afford to pay the sort of rent that would be required for a family the size of ours.

I studied the way in which the Swedes provided homes for themselves by individual and cooperative construction; I read Ralph Borsodi's old book again, "Flight from the City," and studied the fashion in which he, through the years, provided himself with a fine home without having to assume a life-time mortgage. I recalled my own brother-in-law in northern Alaska who in a single year after his marriage, by his own efforts, provided a home for his bride, free and clear. I recalled some of the cases mentioned from time to time in Dr. Kenkel's excellent *Social Justice Review* of German immigrant families in the eighties who built their own homes, even within the urban limits of that day. Why, in coping with a desperate problem, is direct action not possible? This is my plan.

I shall return to civil life with a little capital, not much, not quite enough to buy a new car, but enough to buy a small piece of land in the country. I am looking for a few acres with access to some tidal estuary directly east of Washington. I shall borrow money under the GI Bill of Rights only if my own funds are not sufficient to purchase a particularly desirable piece of property. It may be that the land will already possess some sort of a structure. If so, all the better. I can spend free time in the summer making it habitable for winter. If not, I shall build a temporary structure for the coming winter, using materials at hand, second-hand lumber, perhaps even a log cabin if timber is available. Or I may be able to buy one of the war surplus buildings and move it to the property. Later on I could turn it into a chicken-house.

★

The key to this whole decentralist solution to the housing problem lies in the matter of rent: so long as one pays out as much as a third of one's income just for shelter, saving is impossible and a home can never be obtained. The secret of my plan is to get building funds directly from the saving in rent. The cheapest possible rent I could pay in Washington, if I ever found a vacancy and a landlord who would accept children, would be $85 a month for a family the size of mine. That is over a thousand dollars a year. Even if I bought a tent and camped out with my family during the glorious spring and summer months, the saving would be appreciable and every dollar saved in rent could go toward the purchase of building supplies. By fall I could have a structure that would be habitable for the winter and by the following spring, with the money saved from the rent, I should be able to start the construction of a permanent home. This home will be built from plans purchased for a nominal sum from the School of Living at Suffern, New York. Our home will be built in units. The first unit will consist simply of a living room and kitchen. As finances permit, other units will be added.

I see no reason why I cannot stay young even

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in my old age by continuing to make improvements and additions on our home. It will be one of those places that will expand with the needs of the family. And best of all there will be no mortgage to worry about. The project will be self-financed by savings. After the first year there will be a vegetable garden, a pig or two fattening during the summer months, a cow for milk, butter and cheese, and enough chickens for our own needs. We should be able to cut between a half and two-thirds from our food bill. These dollars too can go into building. If hard times come again—and believe me, they will—we shall not have to worry about keeping up payments on the homestead. We shall simply cease our building operations until we can afford them again.

It would not be fair to the reader to omit some discussion of the price we expect to pay in toil and discomfort in order to have a place of our own. First, some of the dollars saved will unquestionably go into increased transportation costs. This can be held to a minimum, however, by using a share-ride plan with one's neighbors. The hauling of building materials I have already solved by the purchase of a one-ton trailer I can tow behind my car in going back and forth to work. On my way home in the evening I can stop at a quarry or a brick-yard and load up. During the first year, unless we find a place already equipped, we shall probably have to do without sanitary facilities. We may even have to do without electricity for a while. We shall actually live under slum conditions, crowded into a single room or two, and using an old-fashioned stove for cooking and heat. But unlike the slums, we shall have space and air around us, we shall be rulers of our little domain and every day will see some improvement. We shall have to do most of our own work. But the Swedish experiments indicated that the average man can learn the fairly simple crafts needed to build a habitable dwelling. I am fortunate in already having some of these skills and I have no fears about being unable to master the other skills required.

By using this rent-saving principle, it was possible for us before the war to acquire a fourteen-ton sloop. During the coming summer this boat will serve as a temporary home for us, and in a pinch, we could moor it off our expected property and use it as a floating home or as a sort of winter dormitory until we have the necessary construction ready on land.

This whole plan of ours is individualistic and undoubtedly problems will arise which will tax all of our unaided energies. The whole problem would be simplified if a cooperative group were to launch some such plan. Indeed, the April issue of the *American Magazine* contained an account of just such a cooperative development outside of Philadelphia in which each family built at least a portion of its own home. The April *Reader's Digest* contained a most interesting article about a group of almost penniless Fayette County coal miners who through their own labor and a small amount of borrowed capital provided handsome two-story stone houses for themselves on individual homesteads. By joining forces with others a more attractive bargain can be obtained in purchasing land; and in sharing larger pieces of equipment, a cement mixer for example, the building can be facilitated. Then too, there are certain jobs which require manpower for a short period of time. Neighbors would be very useful in such circumstances. I won't go into the more important social and religious values of community in contrast to isolated family living. We have already heard of several decentralists in Washington who share our views. Perhaps we can pool resources.

★

After planning the above, I was surprised to read in the *Women's Home Companion* an article by an official in the Public Housing Administration advocating just such an approach to the obtaining of a home by many American families. His suggestion was to capitalize one's vacation money ten years in advance and use the fund to buy a piece of land and then gradually build on the land during one's vacations and week-ends. He gave case studies of people who had done this successfully, people with no previous building experience.

Some readers will object that too much original capital is required for this scheme. Actually, less is required than for the down payment on one of the urban homes now being built. For the price of a good second-hand car, which a surprising number of Americans still seem able to afford, one can buy a piece of land near most of the cities and towns of America. The question then resolves itself into one's determination and willingness to sacrifice and to rely upon one's own efforts to acquire a permanent home. The full cooperation of one's wife is essential of course. Mine is willing to do without electricity and plumbing for a year or two and her only condition is that we get our land where we have access to the water and our beloved boat, the *Gray Dawn*. The boat of course opens to us vast areas which cannot be reached by car. We can even freight in our building supplies from Baltimore to any point on Chesapeake Bay by using the boat and borrowing a small scow from a friend of mine.

I am not unaware of the need for a national housing program and I shall write to our Maryland Congressmen to get behind the bills that will do the most good. But in the meantime, I am going to start solving our personal housing problem in my own way. If building materials remain

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scarce, I can always use rammed earth construction. As a boy in Alaska I recall that many of my friends lived in sod houses. The important thing is the will and determination to build, and a little piece of land you can call your own. If several hundred thousand Americans followed the plan outlined above, dwelling space could be released to those who have neither the will nor the talent for decentralized living.

My great-grandfather cut down the trees near West Bend, Wisconsin, a hundred years ago, and in the midst of the wilderness carved out a home for his family. My grandfather raised five sons and three daughters on the same land. What my ancestors and the ancestors of most Americans did a century ago without any of the aids of modern mechanical progress surely can be done again if one has only the will.

Education for the Good Life

II

Jacques Maritain

PASSING on to the basic rôle of the family in moral education, I should like to recall that nothing in human life is of greater importance than intuition and love, and neither intuition nor love are a matter of training or learning. Yet education must be primarily concerned with them. As for love, the question is above all to liberate the spiritual energies of the soul, those energies of goodness which are badly repressed by the false realism and vulgarity of the wicked philosophy of life current today. Contrary to the precept of Descartes, who, in his provisional rules of morals, decided to imitate the customs and doings of his fellowmen, we must first of all encourage personal conscience not to hesitate to disagree with collective behavior for the sake of truth, on the condition, of course, that it is certainly a question of truth. Such is the rule of the Gospel: "Do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not." The first step to be taken by everyone who wishes to act morally, and to keep alive in himself the sources of love, is to make up his mind not to act according to the general customs and doings of his fellowmen.

Love, human love as well as divine love, is not a matter of training or learning, for it is a gift; the love of God is a gift of nature and of grace; that is why it can be the first precept. How could we be commanded to put into action a power which we have not received or may not first receive? Charity, or that love of God which is communion in friendship, is a grace-given virtue, and grows, like other virtues, by its own acts. There are no human methods or techniques for getting or developing charity, any more than any other kind of love. There is nevertheless education in this matter: an education provided by trial and suffering, and which consists primarily in removing impediments and obstacles to love, and first of all sin, and in developing moral virtues.

The help of educators is obviously needed here. As is the case with that which concerns in general the direct formation of the will, the educational sphere involved is first of all the family. Is not family love the primary pattern of any love uniting a community of men? Is not fraternal love the very name of that neighborly love which is but one with the love of God? No matter what deficiencies the family group may present in certain particular cases, no matter what trouble and disintegration the economic and social conditions of our day have brought to family life, the nature of things cannot be changed. And it is an essential law of the nature of things, both that the vitality and virtues of love develop first in the family and that moral and religious training is first at work in the family. Not only the examples of the parents, and the rules of conduct which they inculcate and the religious habits and inspiration which they further and the memories of their own lineage which they convey—in short the educational work which they directly perform—but also, in a more general way, the common experiences and common trials, efforts, sufferings and hopes and the daily labor of family life and the daily love which pushes forward in the midst of slaps and kisses, constitutes the normal fabric where the feelings and the will of the child are naturally shaped. The society made up by his parents, his brothers and sisters, is the primary human society and human environment in which, consciously and subconsciously, he becomes acquainted with love and from which he receives his ethical nourishment. Here both conflicts and harmonies have educational values; a boy who has experienced common life with his sisters, a girl who has done so with her brothers, have gained unawares invaluable and irreplaceable moral advance as regards the relationship between the sexes. Over and above all, family love and brotherly love

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create in the heart of the child those hidden recesses of tenderness and repose the memory of which man so badly needs, and in which, perhaps after years of bitterness, he will immerse himself anew each time a natural trend to goodness and peace awakens in him. Father's and mother's love is the natural fostering of the sources of love within the child. If they love God, the child will also know through them the very countenance of such love, and never forget it.

I am aware that the examples of the parents are not always good, or their educational work always well directed, or their very love for their children always genuine, or the life of the family group always heartening. We all know that the worst abuses and psychic deviations and unjust sufferings are possible in family life and education. French novelists, notably François Mauriac or Philippe Hériat, made clear what power of moral destruction a bourgeois family may display and how the despotic love of some mothers may ruin the life of their sons. The history of family life, all through the centuries, is no prettier than any other human history. What I maintain is that nature exists and that nothing can do away with nature. There are freaks in nature; then exceptional measures must be taken. But let us speak of what happens as a rule. Even at the most mediocre average level, nature at play in family life has its own spontaneous ways of compensating after a fashion for its own failures, its own spontaneous processes of self-regulation, which nothing can replace, and provides the child with a moral formation and an experience of mutual love, however deficient it may be, which nothing can replace. Many a bird falls from the nest. It would be nonsense to undertake to destroy all the nests fairly well prepared by mother-birds, and to furnish the forests of the world with better conditioned artificial nests and improved cages.

It is not my purpose to speak now of the other educational sphere directly concerned with the moral shaping of man, namely the Church. Suffice it to say that here again we are confronted with the law of love proper to the family, this time the very family of God, since grace causes men to be of the lineage of God, and, according to Saint Paul, "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." To grow in the love of God, and, by the same token, of our fellow-men, is the serious business in this household. Saint Paul also says: "He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law." So that all the moral work by means of which Christianity endeavors to bring up the human person, is centered upon the development, strengthening and purification of that brotherly love which actually enables us to become the neighbor of any man, by having pity on him and caring for his wounds.

As concerns finally the rôle of school and college education with regard to love as the very soul of moral life, two principles which I consider basically important find here a particular application: on the one hand, with regard to direct influence on the will, the rôle of the school amounts above all to that premoral training which depends not on teaching, but on the humble policy, common life and discipline of the school: here the basic mood should be given in actual fact by constant attention to the requirements of the rules of justice in the school-community, and to the requirements of sincere fellowship and brotherly love.

On the other hand, with regard to the indirect action on the will by means of intellectual enlightenment, the rôle of school and college education is momentous indeed, in so far as teaching of true or false knowledge has efficacy to liberate or hamper the spiritual energy of love within the soul. For it is by the fallacies of pseudo-science and false philosophy of life that love trying to find its way amidst the jumbled world of passions and instincts is often withered and killed. Nowhere is the vigilance and genuine information of the intellect of greater practical import. All errors which make fun of goodness, all those practical sophistries which keep moving in our atmosphere, and avail themselves of cheap Darwinism, cheap Machiavellianism, or so-called realism to make youth despair of the power of truth and love should be thoroughly discussed and accurately criticized. The existence and power of evil should be frankly faced: and faced also the existence and power of God, which are greater. The true laws of being and of human existence, which are hidden to an empiricist gaze, but which reason and faith perceive, and which finally imply that evil is a bad payer and that love has the last word, should be contemplated without flinching and elucidated. A teaching which, not by empty idealistic words, but by dint of intellectual strength and exact disquisition of reality, inspires trust in goodness and generosity, is surely not enough to awaken the wellsprings of love in the depths of human freedom, but is efficacious to protect them when they are present, and to set them free.

*

It is time that we consider more closely the question of moral teaching in the school and the college. And first the teaching of *natural morality*. I pointed out a moment ago that as regards the actual acquisition of moral virtues, ethical knowledge is indeed indispensable, yet far from sufficient. It is equally fair to reverse the statement and to say: ethical knowledge is indeed far from sufficient, but it is indispensable.

To know, if it is a question of speculative knowledge, does little for virtue: the little it does,

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nevertheless, is beyond question, because, on the average, knowledge—I mean knowledge which deals with objects "of greatest worth"—cleans and pacifies the mind; moreover, speculative knowledge establishes the metaphysical principles concerning nature and the world which are the foundations of the ethical truths concerning human freedom and conduct. And to know these ethical truths, that is to possess practical and moral knowledge, to have practical reason enlightened and sound, does a great deal for virtue, I mean on the average. Virtue is not a by-product of knowledge, but true moral knowledge is a condition for virtue. "Human conduct is of its very nature reasonable and enlightened conduct, else it is not truly human" (Gerald B. Phelan). Thus moral sciences are at the core of any true humanism. The education of man, therefore, necessarily involves a careful and extensive moral teaching. And since teaching is the proper job of the school and the college, obviously moral teaching concerning both personal and civic morals must be an essential part of school and college education. The absence of paucity of such teaching in formal education is a great misfortune. Filling this gap will probably be one of the chief concerns of the reform needed by our time. Moral teaching should be pursued all through formal education.

The trouble starts with the question of the nature and content of this teaching. Many efforts have been made in the last century, especially in Europe, with hopes which proceeded from Kantian inspiration, to build in and for schools a morality of their own, disconnected from any religious creed and based on pure reason. The result was thoroughly disappointing. Sociologism and positivism were to nibble and consume the ethics of pure reason. Moreover, an ethics which, like that of Kant, ignores nature, good, and the trend to happiness, and conceives of itself as merely lawgiving by virtue of categorical imperatives, suffers from an internal incurable weakness.

There nevertheless exists a natural law. And there is a valid moral philosophy. Is it not possible to found on natural law and moral philosophy a consistent moral teaching in school and college? My answer is yes and no. Natural law is unwritten and unsystematized law—too natural, so to speak, to become a subject of school-teaching without losing its most human truth, inexpressible in the manner of a code. Moral philosophy is philosophy—too highly and delicately rationalized to become a subject of school-teaching (except at a time when it is taught as philosophy) without losing its most valuable truth, which depends on all the principles and proofs of philosophical reason. I would state therefore, that in a good college curriculum moral philosophy should be taught—both through lectures and seminars—during the last college year. But I think that during the years which precede philosophical training, no special teaching and courses should be given on morality abstractedly detached from its religious environment. Natural morality, however, natural law, and the great ethical ideas conveyed by civilization, should be taught during these years. They are the very treasure of classical humanism, they must be communicated to the youth, not as a subject of special courses, but as embodied in the humanities and liberal arts, especially as an integral part of the teaching of literature, poetry, fine arts and history. This teaching should be permeated with the feeling and concern of such values. The reading of Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Herodotus, Thucydides, Demosthenes, Plutarch, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius (better to read them carefully in tranlsation than to learn their language and to read only bits); the reading of Vergil, Terence, Tacitus, and Cicero, of Dante, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Milton, Pascal, Racine, Montesquieu, Goethe, Dostoevski, feeds the mind with the sense and knowledge of natural virtues—honor, pity—of the dignity of man and of the spirit, the greatness of human destiny, the entanglements of good and evil, the *caritas humani generis,* more than any course in natural ethics. It conveys to the youth the moral experience of mankind.

Communications

BOSTON'S POLITICAL MORALS

Sioux City, Ia.

TO the Editors: I believe that almost every city of approximately 50,000 population or more in the United States is afflicted in a similar way as Boston. Political graft with its logical sequence of crime, affecting both adults and juveniles, involving loss of characters and possibly of souls in both groups.

Catholics especially should be thankful to God for the article appearing in THE COMMONWEAL emanating from the heart and soul of Miss Loughlin, at this momentous period of our nation's history. The article is just as applicable to Sioux City, Iowa, as it is to Boston, Massachusetts. May God bless Miss Loughlin! the people need Catholic action of this kind.

JOHN CONWAY.

Cut Bank, Montana.

TO the Editors: A salute to Katherine Loughlin, the Boston woman who told us about the political morals of her town. I have often pondered the reason for clerical—and general Catholic—complacency in the face of conditions such as exist in Boston and so many other metropolitan centers, bossed mainly by Irish Catholics.

In logic can we be resentful of the shocked criticisms of non-Catholics after viewing such situations?

It is my experience and observation, too, that where

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Catholics take an active, intelligent part in civic and public affairs, discarding their "inferiority" complexes and not assuming a whimpering attitude about discrimination, they are well received, usually warmly received, into community counsels. It is to be deplored that so many of them sulk and stay away from civic and general public gatherings—that is not the answer to Protestant prejudice.

DAN WHETSTONE,
Republican National Committee.

THE LAST HOURS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: "The Last Hours" by Massimo Salvadori-Paleotti is indeed a model of restrained objective reporting. I was in Milano three days after the CLNAI had opened the attack against the nazi overlords and their fascist tools, and I saw a bit of the peoples' revolution described by Mr. Salvadori-Paleotti.

Just as it was the increasing and advancing pressure of the American, Polish and British troops that ensured the success of the Italian patriot insurrection throughout northern Italy, so it was the crippling and harrying activities, the sabotage and espionage activities of the partisans, of those "rebelli" so called by the German and so feared, that quickened and made easier the upward sweep of the Allies. Over nine-tenths of Allied agents in occupied territory were and are citizens of Italy, loyal to the democratic government of Rome.

Throughout the winter of '44-'45 the partisans suffered untold casualties in their raids against the enemy and in their scouting and patrolling for American troops. One sector of the Allied line was held by partisans, and they advanced so rapidly as to spearhead their area for the Allies. Then there were the five Italian divisions who fought like lions in the British sector. That more Italian troops did not fight is due to the British, who refused to have more Italians fighting, and turned down the request of the Italian Government to put more troops in the field. England refused because she had her eyes on Italian colonies, as was later disclosed.

Despite the hardships, the disease, the tortures, the isolation, the terror, the famine, the difficulties created by England, Italian patriots did, as history records, liberate the great cities of northern Italy and Trieste. Despite the Allied Military Government, despite Poletti, Stone, and their British opposites, Italy did set her house in order; and she will continue doing so, even if the British, the Russians, the Titoites, and the confused Americans do hamper her reconstruction. By executing Mussolini and his underlings Italy showed that she could handle her own affairs and dispense with the costly services of foreign governments. All that Italy asks is that Americans in particular and the world in general should try to understand her problems and lend her a hand so she and she alone can rebuild her cities, her farms, her industries, her democratic and pacific life. She pleads for equity and justice; not for charity in the sense of a handout; nor for a vindictive and immoral dictated treaty.

Before closing I should like to state what all of Milano knows, what Milanese saw with their own eyes. The

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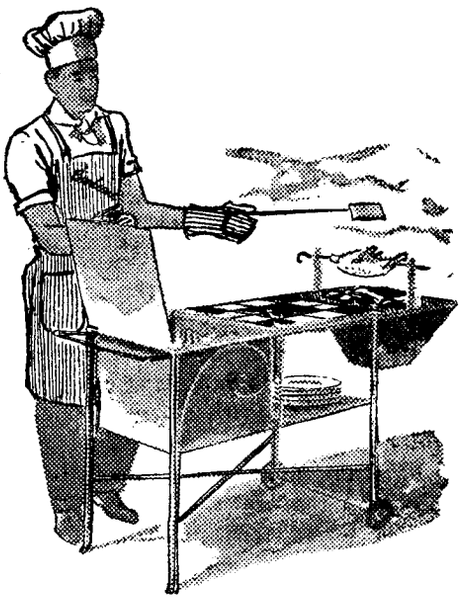

A MESSAGE TO MEN ON OUR

barbecue grills

for brightening up your barbecue set-up at home, you really should see our grand new grill-cooler-server, pictured above . . . and if you're planning to go camping or fishing soon, you should consider, too, the folding grill we picked up for you in California—plus important accessories! You'll find them in our Barbecue Shop, versed in its barbecue know-how! fourth floor

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Green Flames, the Christian Democratic patriotic forces, outnumbered the partisans of the actionists, the communists and the socialists three to one. Italy can still produce Catholics who are prepared to fight and die for Christian democracy, as well as missionaries who can leave their beautiful land and go to foreign peoples so that they and their institutions may be restored to Christ.

JOSEPH CALDERON.

The Stage & Screen

Call Me Mister

FOR OBVIOUS reasons it is the policy of this column —and I expect it may as well be openly stated as further implied—that the *producers* of any new, nervous, nervy, inventive, choice, smart, aware, daring, or merely commonsensical grist on the street should get the first gold star. Therefore, at the top of the following cheerscore, please check the names of Melvyn Douglas and Herman Levin, whose revue seems to me very good indeed. Employing only talent which has heretofore served in each branch of the armed services, the thing could easily have depended upon sentimentality rather than stuff for its final click and it is agreeable to be able to underline that throughout, heroics give place to satire, and as the opening number indicates, no charity is pleaded. In a quick survey, I think Arnold Auerbach's and Arnold B. Horwitt's sketches, and Harold Rome's music and lyrics, can be divided into some wit, some corn, and lastly, a series of direct observations translated into song for Lawrence Winters, the admirable Negro singer. I felt the smooth stuff, pointed in the program as cumulative episodes in a love story, somewhat long. But this part of the show is kept advisedly simple and young, the tunes reminiscent of Richard Rodger's I thought, and it seemed to draw the house as much as anything else. However, it was the sophisticated section which delighted me and best displayed, I think, the discoveries. Such skits as the Air Corps one, with no one under a Major or over nineteen on the stage; the Navy Lieutenant's Park Avenue Yule; the Southern Senator's PLAN in a scene with the cigar smoke painted in puffs on the air—all excellent. Plus the sung and stepped "Surplus Blues," "Military Life," and "South America, Take It Away." On the musical end, Mr. Rome's lyrics are not only brilliant but more, brilliantly arranged. In numbers such as the "Yuletide" one, and "Going Home Train," it is not only pleasing to hear the subtle divisions of words and notes, but it is also visually satisfying, I think, to watch the direction of sound: the singers pick up and relinquish the parts of the song. In the South American parody, the process is introduced into the solo itself with a riotous refrain interrupting even the syllables of the lyric and reducing the house to rhythmical stamping. Betty Garrett in this arrangement and in all her other work, dramatic and vocal, is extremely neat, versatile and funny. Moreover she has a good time, a quality which is as indispensable as it is indescribable. For the rest, Jules Munshin looks like the coming comic, although I think I like his Peter Arno attack a little better than the uproarious Danny Kaye one. And the quiet endless frenzy of George Hall impressed me as wonderful. If there are any quibbles (two, I'm sorry) these will be that the useless recurrent ballet is neither well danced nor particularly interesting, and Grace Houston's costumes add up to nothing at all, leaving a large hole in an otherwise adjusted show. Elsewhere on the pictorial end, Lester Palokov's painted flats seemed to me exactly as witty as they must have been inexpensive. In conclusion, I should like to add that I attended the shindig with a veteran of three invasions in ETO, and that he approved, out loud. (*At the National.*)

Woman Bites Dog

AS IT IS undoubtedly true that the title for this Spewack comedy, maligning the newspaper publishing business, might better have been "Woman Bites *Dead* Dog," I suppose this post mortem notice had better be headed, "Reviewer Soothes Bitten Producer." However, with sternest reference to my notes covering second-night performance and audience reaction, I still cannot understand the critical ennui greeting the show nor Kermit Bloomgarden's immediate closing of it. It seemed to me exactly as good, often better, than the rest of the formula-farce stuff on view; and Taylor Holmes's performance, particularly his "perfidious Albion" scene, plus the trio of wailing widows whose repeated broadcasting of the simple refrain, "Shame! Shame! Shame!" from an airplane towered through the third act, were certainly among the high funny notes of the season. A mysterious business.

KAPPO PHELAN.

Fun Without Mickey

THERE ARE those who say that Griffith, Chaplin and Disney are America's outstanding contribution to the art of cinema. On the whole I agree with this opinion, although I should add a few more to that list of great and surviving names. Right now, however, I must get down to current business—discussion of Disney's new film. There is no doubt that Walt Disney is an American genius. His Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck are positive additions to our folklore and are as well known nationally and internationally as Uncle Remus and Paul Bunyan. But most geniuses who soar to the heights have their periods of slipping; and the Disney films on our screens in the past few years showed more slipping than soaring. This was due mainly, no doubt, to the fact that the master and his studio were devoting most of their efforts to war work of one kind or the other. Disney's short pieces during the war years and "The Three Caballeros," though technically advanced, were not among his better achievements. So I am glad to report that the new *"Make Mine Music"* is a step forward and some of it stands with Disney's best. The film, 74 minutes long, is a potpourri of numbers strung together and providing some first-rate entertainment.

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"Make Mine Music" illustrates well the whole gamut run by Disney's studio: from the tasteless comic-strip pictures in "The Martins and the Coys" and the cheap calendar art of a sticky number called "Blue Bayou" to the wonderfully imaginative sequence in which notes and music come to life through superb drawings while the Goodman Quartet renders "After You've Gone." Everyone will have his own favorite in this film, subtitled "A Musical Fantasy in Ten Parts," which specializes in music in a popular vein. Some will prefer Disney's nouveau nostalgia that accompanies Jerry Colonna's recitation of "Casey at the Bat," or the cute drawings we see while the Andrews Sisters sing the sentimental story of "Johnny Fedora and Alice Bluebonnet." Others will prefer the love song that Andy Russell sings while landscapes dissolve and melt on the other side of a rain-drenched window. I found the dance number done by the silhouettes of Lichine and Riabouchinska technically interesting but only "so what?" artistically. And while "Peter and the Wolf" has Prokofieff's music and Narrator Sterling Holloway's expressive voice, the Disney art comes out second best. Two of the ten numbers are top-notch Disney. "All the Cats Join In," a jazz interlude featuring Benny Goodman and his orchestra, showing life among the juke-box set, is done in the hilarious, irresponsible spirit of these bobby-sockers, and uses color and form imaginatively to put over its satirical comment. "The Whale Who Wanted to Sing at the Met," a masterpiece of animated cartoon, tells a delightful story with all the genuine charm, humor and surprise that have given Disney's name world-wide fame. In this little gem, Nelson Eddy sings all the voices (quite a trick, but I can't see why this was necessary or important) and the music and drawings blend to make a perfect whole. So, while "Make Mine Music" has neither Mickey nor Donald, it does have Willie the Whale and much that is worth seeing and hearing; its varied program is worth many times the price of admission.

One always wonders who, if anyone, settles matters of taste during the making of a movie. There's a new film coming up soon, *"East to Wed,"* which has a good cast, producer, director, writers and even a blaze of technicolor—but in its story it throws taste to the winds. Because a blasé heiress, played by Esther Williams, is suing his newspaper for libel, Keenan Wynn hires Van Johnson to put Esther in an embarrassing position. First Van must marry Keenan's fiancée (Lucille Ball), then he must interest Esther in himself (which shouldn't be too much trouble since he's Van Johnson). Then Lucille will rush in and shout, "You've stolen my husband!" This diabolical plan works—but not too smoothly. Esther and Van really fall for each other. And in the meantime Lucille has also fallen for her husband. But Van marries Esther anyway, and then says ha-ha to Lucille, "my marriage to you wasn't legal because you weren't really divorced from your last husband." And Lucille answers, "Oh yes it was; I got another divorce in Reno." At this point the scriptwriters gave up—because they couldn't untangle the plot either. Not the good song-and-dance numbers in this film, nor the charms of Van Johnson,

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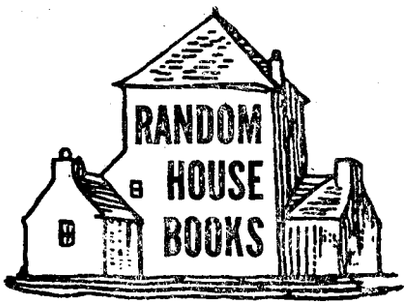

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nor the figure of Esther Williams can sell this story. I got so concerned over the dirty trick being played on Lucille Ball that I took the whole thing seriously. Strangely enough so did Director Edward Buzzell who suddenly allowed Miss Ball to stop clowning and to play her rôle for whatever meaning it might have. She gives an excellent performance—albeit one that is completely out of place in what's supposed to be a frivolous comedy. And what on earth, one wonders, are the movies coming to!

If you used to like the old Harold Lloyd or Charles Ray comedies, you'll enjoy *"Little Giant,"* which is in the same tradition. The surprise, however, is that though it stars Abbott *and* Costello, Costello plays the lead, a dumb cluck from the farm who goes to the big city and finally makes good as a vacuum cleaner salesman. Bud Abbott handles two rôles to compensate for their being small. There is little slapstick this time, but there is a lot of victory-of-innocence stuff. Lou Costello manages to be appealing as the yokel, especially when he thinks he's psychic.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

Minerva's Progress; Tradition and Dissent in American Culture. Alfred E. Cohn. Harcourt. $2.00.

DR. COHN is a specialist in heart diseases and rheumatic fevers and a trained scientist who has served the Government in two wars. He has read amazingly far afield, in a desultory and possibly undiscriminating manner, in philosophy, government and history. He has come to some definite conclusions which he offers to seekers of a pattern, based upon history as an experience; and, yet, his pattern lacks a design even as his "culture" is without definition, other than the distillation of experience, meanders into dissent in education. In his tract Dr. Cohn observes America with hopes, doubts and fears. He writes easily in a distinguished style. He challenges complaisant thought in quotable sentences; yet he will jolt or exhilarate his reader only in so far as that worthy accepts tradition and resents dissent or worships dissent and detests tradition. Every reader must be his own reviewer, ready to agree or dispute, but at least to think.

In a world adrift, Dr. Cohn insists that dissent, democracy, science, and history have destroyed isolation and made "citizenship in this world as a whole" something which can no longer be postponed. He finds that "the conscience of America is troubled" when its creed is violated by inequality everywhere—racial and religious for instance. That creed was first expressed in "the Declaration of Independence hammered out of the whole Mediterranean-Atlantic experience." Whatever other policies or qualities our people have evolved, the author feels that "the right to dissent, based on their history and adapted to their chosen purpose, certainly is one of them."

In the universities, there was dissent from their very foundations, even as today: "The cohabitation of tested fundaments with vigorous ephemera, not to mention trivia, has troubled thoughtful, scholastic morals quite aside from souls ridden merely by tradition."

With this Dr. Cohn gives his views of education: the conservation rôle of universities; their conservatism;

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Eliot's elective system where "instruction was everyday more multifarious and more chaotic"; the schools of dissenting sects; St. John's College adventure as a "false scent" in an omniscient way and a "crying out passionately its technique for salvation"; and endowments for higher research as costs rise beyond the most generous university budgets. As for teaching, there is still hope in confusion, but he would observe that:

> Teachers must have moral strength, a sense for beauty of the spirit, the seeing eye, the watchful soul, the inquiring mind. Teachers must be free of conventional prejudices. Teachers must be free of conventional fears, and free especially from the fear of financial insecurity. The cost is great. But a nation that can afford a war in order to make its physical body secure must afford the cost of fortifying its soul—in and out of the market place, in business and in life. If it fails to recapture its soul, it may forfeit the security of its physical body. . . . In the position of teacher, no society can afford the second best. Teachers must have position.

As long as amassing wealth was an accomplishment of laissez-faire, "the opportunity to dispense that wealth was looked upon as evidence of nobility of character and of the possession of social vision, but the time is arriving when the burdens will be greater than the taxed philanthropists can support. In foundation, there was good and evil. At any rate, "they have given many a man of good will the opportunity to expend his money, no matter how gotten, in the public interest." Their power has been great and concentrated. Similarly there may be dangers in government-directed research, yet support may have to come from taxes. A University of the United States he regards as something which should be well debated before advocacy, regardless of the desirability for supporting men "who assume the responsibility for the intellectual health of the nation and who carry on the advancement of its learning." Rightly may one conclude with his Irish warning: "We are forever in need of the John Philpot Currans who propose to us eternal vigilance."

RICHARD J. PURCELL.

Midwest at Noon. Graham Hutton. Chicago. $3.50.

MR. HUTTON is an Englishman who came to the United States in 1937 and stayed on during most of the war years as Director of the Office of British Information in the Midwest. He is described as a "businessman, teacher, writer, editor, and student of international affairs," so it would be abnormal if he did not write a book about the Midwest at the end of his duty there. The book he has written is a good one.

Mr. Hutton's claim for his work is very mild; merely a record of personal impressions, he says, not written to wound or annoy. Actually his book is well above the average traveler's record and he may feel quite certain that after reading it his friends in the Midwest won't go away mad. Everyone gets a fair shake: the members of the Rotary clubs, the Parent-Teacher Associations, and the ladies' cultural societies. Mr. Hutton even passes up the easy chance to rough-up the small Midwest businessman for his tribal clichés.

Many things in this book were worked over by good and bad writers a long time before Mr. Hutton came to the Midwest, but he has been more thorough than most people, and after gathering and examining the Midwest—history, land, cities, myths, people, and ideas—he finds it:

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"no longer mainly agricultural or rural; not pioneer-minded; not Republican; no more isolationist than other regions; not undereducated and unproductive of the graces of life; no longer a region of little business against big business and small towns and cities against the big cities of other regions." Even the Midwest outline has faded, rubbed away by the constant movement of standard ideas and methods that are fusing Midwest and East into a new uniform mold called the "American North." Mr. Hutton loyally expects the vigorous, romantic, adaptable Midwest to dominate this inevitable union and furnish young men most likely to produce a decent, workable solution for the oppositions between the American individual and his industrial society.

Because this is a good book (a better one, for example, than Mr. Denis Brogan's recent work about Americans), it is a shame that some accidental things may keep it from getting about as much as Mr. Hutton and his publishers would like. The jacket and make-up of the book give it the unfortunate air of being a new public school textbook, a circumstance that can only arouse chilling memories in people idling through bookstores. And the more athletic reader who gets into the book is sure to think Mr. Hutton's prose slow going in places.

JOHN BRODERICK.

The B.O.W.S. Margalo Gillmore and Patricia Collinge. Harcourt. $2.50.

THIS is the story of a long-haired drama that became a hit where it was least expected. In the summer of 1944, Katharine Cornell agreed to head a unit of the American Theater Wing for an overseas tour with her own choice of play and cast. After much discussion, with many misgivings, she chose "The Barretts of Wimpole Street" because she wanted to do her best for the boys and her best was Rudolph Besier's play. A dubious USO and Army finally approved the project; and the cast and crew of "The Barretts" became Unit No. 319 but later became better known (because of the Service's love for initials and reducing everything to essentials) as the B.O.W.S.

Since "some of my best friends are actors," I am never particularly surprised at actors' enthusiasm for themselves. This book was written by two actresses (Miss Gillmore, who went on the tour, and Miss Collinge, who didn't) and has plenty of appreciation for theater-folk; but there is a minimum of this sort of thing and a maximum of appreciation for our fighting men. The author (Miss Gillmore is the book's "I") stresses again and again the men, the fine job they did, their need for entertainment and this unit's humble efforts to give a few hours' relaxation either with "The Barretts" or the specialty acts they staged at hospitals. Although this book includes much thoughtful matter in its poignant descriptions of the suffering and privations that the B.O.W.S. saw in Italy, France, Holland, it is mainly a light and pleasantly written account of the experiences of this extraordinary group on a special mission: to make their unusual audiences forget themselves and their troubles for a while at least. The six-months tour proved a tremendous success.

For me the most exciting chapter (in a book that wins many chuckles for its amusing anecdotes about the cast's discomforts and pleasures conditioned by the overseas change of values) is the vivid description of the first performance at Caserta. Opening-night jitters were finally calmed by the realization of the overwhelming reception

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the cast and play were getting. The B.O.W.S. were thrilled at seeing an audience born—an audience of men, seasoned fighters, homesick boys, the wounded—many of whom had never seen a play before. From that early chapter, "The B.O.W.S." held me to the finish; and I almost applauded these sentences as the cast was saying their farewells to Europe: "Every turn of the wheels was taking us further from them and closer to America. But America was in Europe too, I thought. All over the face of it—supplies, ammunition, medicine, food, clothes, men. It was all one now. We were linked by lines of troops, and lines of stretchers, and lines of crosses. It should be a strong chain, I thought, it could be. . . ."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Iran. William S. Haas. Columbia. $3.50.

BACKGROUND information is badly needed for the understanding of current happenings in Iran. Thus this solid book came out just in the appropriate moment. William S. Haas, a former German professor of philosophy, is well qualified to write about this country as he was from 1935 to 1940 an adviser to the Persian Ministry of Education as well as the founder of the Museum of Persian Ethnology and Anthropology in Teheran. Since 1943 he has been associated with the Iranian Institute and School for Asiatic Studies in New York.

The chapters on Iran's history, religious and cultural life are excellent, though written in the somewhat dry style of the old-fashioned German professor who is always afraid that lively writing and a modern approach to his subject might endanger his prestige as a profound scholar. Rightly the author exposes the dangers of a flat egalitarianism throughout the world and favors the unfolding of national personalities with their specific cultural life. Therefore he hopes that Iran may not be abused merely as a tool of the big powers, but be allowed to preserve the individual features brought forth by her historical fate: "A free world guaranteed by the collaboration of peace-loving members would provide the atmosphere wherein a free Iran could prosper."

Unfortunately the chapter on the rôle of Iran in modern world politics is written in a more hasty way than those on Iran's old culture; the story of the Anglo-Russian rivalries in the Middle East is very incomplete and the presentation of present days' problems neither deep nor very precise. The book is supplemented by some excellent photos, economical statistics, information on the irrigation problem, the financial and budget situation, two diplomatic documents and a very careful index. Strangely enough a sound bibliography is missing. Haas's book will prove a disappointment to the student of contemporary affairs but useful as an elementary introduction to Iran's history and civilization.

MAX FISCHER.

Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell: Correspondence of a Friendship. Edited by H. F. McNair. Chicago. $3.75.

THIS pretty piece of book-making is devoted to the working correspondence between Amy Lowell and her co-worker in translating classic Chinese poetry into cadenced English verse. Whether or not their resulting book, "Fir Flower Tablets," should be regarded as a real contribution to understanding between cultures and represented a valid method of translation, or whether it was only a good excuse for Miss Lowell to exercise her poetic imagination on exotic and ready-to-hand materials, it is

Hilaire Belloc

on

COMMUNISM AND MAN

BY F. J. SHEED

IT is far and away, not only the clearest, but the deepest appreciation of the combined problem whose two elements appear in its title: the problem of man suffering, as he particularly suffers today in the industrial chaos, confronted with salvation by communism. A great book it essentially is, not too long for such a title. The first half deals with Marx himself, his too famous, too ponderous, too turgid essay or predication, and its origin in the influence of Hegel. The second half is the monument of the whole affair. It is the second half that stamps it for what it is. For of Hegel I think that posterity will say that he was not at all on the scale or even of the kind that the stupid 19th Century made him out to be. Marx was greater than the master whom he turned upside down, and Marx also for a very different reason was out of touch with reality.

The strength of Communism today does not lie in Marx's thoroughly false analysis but in a quarrel of the orderly and well lit western mind with injustice; and as for his dictatorship of the proletariat that is a silly contradiction in terms. But in the statement of man the rational animal, the social animal, the creature of God (which are the opening divisions of the second part), in the discussion of God and human value, God and the purpose of life, God and suffering, the book rises to its incomparable level of truth, lucidity, and firmness, and within this part the highest, strongest and best is the half dozen pages called "God and Death." It is a lame ending to a notice, but the only one possible, to say: "Go and read it."

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hard to say. Mrs. Ayscough appears to have been sincere and conscientious in her careful analyses of the Chinese characters, and she professed to be charmed with the Lowellian versions, but Miss Lowell's career was so much an example of the triumph of a dominant personality over more willowy natures that the whole thing is suspect.

In addition to much profound talk about Chinese prosody, there is an amusing amount of polite, feminine abuse of critics and scholars who would not agree with the method of translation or its results; there are also many echoes of the naive but exhilarating time when Harriet Monroe was editing "Poetry: A Magazine of Verse," and what American critics are pleased to call a Renaissance of American poetry was producing Edna Millay, Ezra Pound, Miss Lowell herself and other enamored architects of airy rhyme, or the lack of it. There was a tough, old Boston Brahmin behind Miss Lowell's artistic facade, a demanding, ruthless and ambitious Yankee, and more often than not this image peeps between the lines of these letters. J. G. E. HOPKINS.

What It Takes to Rule Japan. Major Harold J. Noble, USMCR. U.S. Camera. $1.50.

THIS is the best and soundest brief statement concerning Japan that I have seen since the war began. It has three great merits. It is written in practically words of one syllable that nobody can misunderstand. The author is a professor in the Department of History at the University of Oregon. He lived in Japan, Korea and Manchuria for over twenty years previous to 1914. He has known the Japanese soldier in action and in peace, in Manchuria in 1932 and in China in 1938. He knows and speaks Japanese fluently and understands the people of Japan. And his third great merit in this matter is that after Pearl Harbor he joined the Marine Corps. He was assigned to Combat Intelligence. The Marine Corps's function in war is not understood by all of us. It does not duplicate any function of either Army or Navy, although, archaically, it remains attached to the Navy. The Marine Corps is a thing apart, a thing in itself. It is a highly trained, highly specialized body using specialized combat weapons and equipment, using every invention of logistics for the purpose of hitting an enemy fast and hard, before other armed bodies can mobilize effectively, and to hold till the slower-moving bodies can come up. The Marine Corps is, therefore, being trained more than ever in all historical and other data to fit its members for that special function. It is quite logical that a Marine officer on inactive duty, who shows so clear an understanding of Eastern Asia and the Pacific as Major Noble, should be drawn to such a university as that of Oregon—or to the representation of such a publication as the *Saturday Evening Post,* as special correspondent.

Not the least part of this excellent little book is the photographic section. WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

CONTRIBUTORS

Walter J. MARX is the author of several books on decentralism.
Jacques MARITAIN is French Ambassador to the Holy See.
Richard J. PURCELL is on leave from Catholic University.
John BRODERICK is a veteran and lives in Allentown, Pa.
Max FISCHER is a New York journalist.
J. G. E. HOPKINS teaches at Columbia University.
William Franklin SANDS was for many years in the diplomatic service.

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